

CITY'S UNBEATEN HOME RECORD CRASHES

By PETER STURGES

OXFORD CITY 0 : WYCOMBE WANDS. 3

OXFORD City lost their unbeaten home record to Wycombe Wanderers in an Isthmian League game, which did not live up to early promise. But Wycombe proved to be the better side, adapting themselves to the heavy going.

Harris made an impressive return to the City attack, which finished without Bricknell.

Oxford City: Maskell; Jackson, Rumble, Goodison, Rundle, Buswell, Bricknell, Woodley, Howlett, Bradbury, Harris.

Wycombe Wanderers: Syrett; Beck, Pullin, Maharg, Roystone, Gale, Worley, Horseman, Lowen, Balson, Hodges.

Referee: H E Jones (Shepherds Bush).

Back from Australia, Bernard Harris replaced Gardner on the left wing and made his first appearance in the league side since November, 1960.

Wycombe had a chance in the second minute when Horseman headed over from Hodges' centre after Pullin and Lowen worked the ball through.

Bradbury pushed the ball through to Harris who centred for Woodley to test the Wycombe keeper. A slip by Jackson let Hodges through but Goodison brought off a rescue act.

Despite the heavy going the game opened at a very fast pace. Wycombe looked the better balanced side and were stronger in midfield.

Woodley crossed a high centre to Bradbury, who shot straight at Syrett, then Howlett went through but was brought down on the edge of the penalty area.

Diving save

A high centre from Bricknell found Harris. The left winger nipped round a defender and placed the ball inside the far post, but Syrett dived in the mud to smother the shot.

City gradually began to settle down and got on top, thanks chiefly to the efforts of Bricknell, who was helped off for treatment for a leg injury in the 20th minute, but soon recovered.

A high centre from the right gave Harris a chance but the left winger miskicked.

Oxford City should have had at least two goals by this time but the more energetic Wanderers were the first to score.

After a free kick taken just inside the City half, Buswell slipped while trying to clear. He tried to shield the ball with his body but BALSON got in a shot and the ball trickled wide of Maskell.

This was the first goal against the City in five league games at the White House ground, and only the fifth goal in nine matches.

Scored again

Adapting themselves to the conditions Wycombe continued to play strongly and with five minutes to go to the interval scored again.

HORSEMAN completely beat Maskell from a narrow angle after a neat four-man close passing move which began on the left.

The visitors were now right on top and Maskell had a busy time in the home goal, twice stopping close range efforts by Lowen.

Half-time: Oxford City 0, Wycombe Wanderers 2.

As the tension increased the seasonal spirit of goodwill departed and the referee spoke to Rumble and Worley.

After Lowen shot over from close range Woodley worked the ball through but Goodison shot over. Harris took the ball through cleverly but his shot was blocked by Syrett who then stopped a drive from Woodley.

Wycombe had a tight hold on the game. City still had their chances, but they never looked like taking them.

After Woodley and Bricknell had shot wide, play was held up again when the City captain was hurt for a second time.

He returned after a five minute absence and pushed the ball through to Howlett, who shot straight at Syrett.

Bricknell then tried to check a high centre and aggravated his groin injury. This time he trooped off dejectedly to the dressing rooms.

Harris moved over to the right wing and Howlett to the left as City tried to salvage a point. But their overall performance did not merit any reward.

Harris's spirit

Syrett, the former City keeper, brought off a number of saves, including a good one at the expense of Goodison, and a lucky one when Harris nipped in.

The left winger gave a display which justified his selection, but City needed more players with his spirit.

Four minutes from the end, LOWEN ran through for Wycombe's third and only a fine save by Maskell prevented Hodges making it four in the last minute.

RESULT:

OXFORD CITY 0
WYCOMBE WANDERERS 3

ADAPTABLE WYCOMBE

Oxford C. 0 Wycombe W. 3

AFTER 11 games without defeat Oxford City lost their unbeaten home record to Wycombe Wanderers, who fully deserved their victory.

Wycombe had plenty of luck, but they were also fitter, faster, and more intelligent in their play.

City persisted in keeping the ball close, and with too many passes going astray, lacked penetration. Their collapse was also more surprising in view of their impressive defensive record—only four goals against in eight previous home League matches and none at all in the last four.

But the main cause of their failure was the poor showing of their attack, which was unbalanced when veteran skipper Brecknell was injured.

Bernard Harris, back after three years in Australia, played his first game for City and showed some of the form which made him one of the best wingers of the League.

But the man of the match was Peter Lowen, the former Maidenhead centre forward who joined the Wanderers this week. He led the attack with skill, scored one goal, and was a constant menace to the home defence.

Belson and Horseman scored Wanderers other two goals, both in the first half. Lowen's score came two minutes from time.